

Message Text

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TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

TREASURY

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

INFO USSAGE NKP

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COGARD

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST BY POUCH

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

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COGARD FOR POLAD

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TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: JANUARY 3 EA PRESS SUMMARY

1. INDOCHINA

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IN CSM COLUMN ON "THE POLITICS OF HUNGER" PAINTING

GRIM PICTURE OF WORLD FOOD CRISIS, CHARLES YOST NOTES

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES ENDORSEMENT OF ROME FOOD

CONFERENCE PROPOSAL THAT US SHIP FOUR MILLION TONS

OF GRAIN TO NEEDY AREAS WITHIN SIX MONTHS. SAYS GRAIN IS PROBABLY AVAILABLE AND FUNDS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE ALSO, IF ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT DRAIN OFF MOST OF ITS AUTHORIZED FOOD AID TO INDOCHINA TO COMPENSATE FOR CONGRESSIONAL CUTS IN US SUPPORT OF THE WAR.

TANK-LED COMMUNIST TROOPS STORM STRATEGIC PROVINCE CAPITAL PHUOC BINH NORTH OF SAIGON, WITH FIGHTING IN STREETS. SAIGON COMMAND VOWS TO DEFEND CITY "AT ANY COST" BUT INITIAL REPORTS INDICATED DEFENDERS LOSING GROUND QUICKLY (UPI, BALTO N-A 1/2). GVN TROOPS FIGHT HOUSE-TO-HOUSE AGAINST APPARENTLY OVERWHELMING ODDS. ARVN SPOKESMAN DESCRIBES SITUATION AS "CRITICAL." VC TRUCE DELEGATES IN SAIGON TURNED DOWN GVN PLEA TO COOPERATE IN EVACUATION OF ABOUT 26,000 CIVILIANS, TERMING IT "FALSE HUMANITARIAN TRICK... AIMED AT DECEIVING PUBLIC OPINION." VC ADDED THAT

THIEU SHOULD BE REPLACED BY ADMINISTRATION "STANDING FOR PEACE AND NATIONAL CONCORD"(PHINQ; AP, NYDN). FALL OF PHUOC BINH WOULD GIVE PRG CONTROL OF AN ENTIRE PROVINCE FOR SECOND TIME IN WAR (UPI, S-N 1/2). FIELD REPORTS SAY GVN TROOPS ARE DUG IN AROUND HUGE UNDERGROUND BUNKER WITH ENOUGH SUPPLIES TO HOLD OUT FOR "SEVERAL MONTHS," BUT AS MANY AS 30,000 CIVILIANS REPORTEDLY STARVING (UPI, CHITRIB).

AP SAYS PHUOC BINH APPEARS TO BE MAJOR GOAL IN NVA-VC OFFENSIVE. MIL OBSERVERS SEE DRIVE AS EFFORT TO CONTROL THREE FRONTIER PROVINCES THAT PROVIDE BUFFER FOR SAIGON, BUT OFFENSIVE'S POLITICAL OBJECTIVES "SOUGHT TO CAPITALIZE ON INTERNAL OPPOSITION" TO THIEU. GVN REPORTS TROOPS HOLDING DESPITE NVA ATTACKS SUPPORTED BY AT LEAST TEN TANKS. SPOKESMAN SAID ONE TANK DESTROYED BY WARPLANES BUT GOVT UNABLE TO FLY REINFORCEMENTS IN BECAUSE OF STRONG AA FIRE THAT HAS ALREADY SHOT DOWN TWO C-130S. CHIEF OF SVN DELEGATION TO JMC SAID ALL UNCLASSIFIED

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ROADS IN HAVE BEEN CUT, ASKED ICCS TO HELP SOLVE HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM OF WOUNDED AND HUNGRY CIVILIANS (SUN, WP).

NYT'S SHIPLER IN SAIGON QUOTES GVN COMMAND THAT VNAF AND ARTILLERY POUND ATTACKERS AND FIGHTING HAS SPREAD TO PHUOC BINH MARKETPLACE AND AIRSTRIP. SAYS MIL ANALYSTS CONSIDER CAMPAIGN AS ONE ASPECT OF EXPANDING WINTER-SPRING OFFENSIVE AIMED AT WIPING OUT GVN MILITARY POCKETS, IMPROVING SUPPLY ROUTES, GAINING LAND AND POPULATION, AND INFLECTING CASUALTIES, THEREBY POSSIBLY TIPPING MIL BALANCE ENOUGH TO FORCE THIEU FROM OFFICE OR GAIN POLITICAL CONCESSIONS. NOTES

THAT PHUOC BINH ATTACK PASSES THRESHOLD OF MIL
ACTIVITY THAT SOME FOREIGN DIPLOMATS BELIEVED C-F
HAD EFFECTIVELY IMPOSED THAT MADE ATTACKS ON PROVINCE
CAPITALS AND ON SAIGON "TABOO."

GVN COMMAND REPORTS ASSAULT ON HOAI DUC DISTRICT TOWN,
ABOUT 56 MILES NE OF SAIGON (SHIPLER, NYT). FIELD
OFFICER CALLS SITUATION "HOPELESS," WITH COMMUNISTS
ALREADY IN MARKETPLACE (PHINQ; UPI, CHITRIB).

REBEL TROOPS POUND PP WITH ROCKETS, LAUNCH GROUND
OFFENSIVE AROUND CAPITAL (UPI, S-N 1/2). GKR
SPOKESMAN SAYS VILLAGE TWO MILES EAST OF PP RECAPTURED
BY FANK TO BLOCK FEARED ATTACK ON CAPITAL (PHINQ; AP,
WP). COMMUNIST-LED REBELS PRESS CLOSER TO PP'S DEFENSE
PERIMETER. MIL SOURCES SAID GKR FORCES WITHDREW
FROM POSITION TWO MILES NORTH UNDER HEAVY ARTILLERY

FIRE. REFUGEES REPORTED THAT FANK SEVENTH DIV HQ
ABOUT SIX MILES NORTH OF CAPITAL HAD BEEN SURROUNDED
ALONG WITH TWO OTHER OUTPOSTS IN AREA; VNAF FLIGHTS
"APPARENTLY SUPPORTING" TROOPS TRYING TO REACH THIS
HQ. REPORTS SAID TWO GKR BATTALIONS LANDED ON MEKONG
EAST BANK OPPOSITE PP BUT HAD MADE ONLY SMALL ADVANCE
AGAINST FIERCE FIGHTING. MIL SOURCES SAID GKR HAD
COMMITTED ALL RESERVES EXCEPT SOME UNITS REMAINING
IN CAPITAL AS LAST LINE OF DEFENSE. OFFICIALS DESCRIBED
INSURGENT ACTION AS "NEW YEAR OFFENSIVE," BUT THERE
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IS NO FIRM INDICATION YET THAT IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO
SEIZE PP (REUTER, NYT).

SPOKESMAN SAYS THAI-BASED US INDOCHINA MIA STAFF TO BE
CUT BY ONE-THIRD, TO 105, SINCE JCRC HAS NEARLY EXHAUSTED
SITES THAT MAY BE SAFELY SEARCHED. ADDS THAT NVA AND
VC CONTINUE NON-COOPERATION. CUTBACK DOES NOT SIGNIFY
REDUCTION IN DOD INTENT TO ACCOUNT FOR MIAS, BUT
"POLITICAL REALITIES" AND SLOW PROGRESS DO NOT JUSTIFY
FULL STAFF (AP, STL P-D 12/29).

2. KOREA

RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE SEOUL (WP) REPORTS
ARREST OF BELGIAN RC PRIEST, REV. DIDIER T'SERSTEVNS,
DURING DEMONSTRATION TO PROTEST OGLE EXPULSION AND
DEMAND RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

3. THAILAND

RTG SOURCES SAY DEPUTY FM CHARTCHAI TO LEAD THAI
OIL MISSION TO PEKING SATURDAY; HE NEGOTIATED DEAL

WITH PRC IN DECMEBER 1973 FOR 50,000 BBL OF OIL (WP).

3. CHINA

CSM NOTES SOUND OF POUNDING FEET, HEAVY BREATHING ON PEKING STREETS, AS NEARLY TWO MILLION CITIZENS JOIN IN SECOND YEAR OF WINTER PROGRAM FOR SCHOOLS, FACTORIES AND OTHER WORK UNITS TO FORM GROUPS OF THIRTY RUNNERS, COVER 1,600 MILES DURING TWO MONTHS OF DAILY RUNNING.

LAT'S ELEGANT IN HK (GLOBE JAN 3) NOTES THAT PRC, WHICH ONCE DENOUNCED ADVERTISING AS A HIGLY VISIBLE MANIFESTATION OF CAPITALISM, NOW USES IT IN DETERMINED CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE EXPORTS TO AND THROUGH COLONY. PRC IS EXPECTED TO EARN 1.56 BILLION DOLLARS THIS YEAR FROM SALES TO AND THROUGH HK. COMPARED TO THAT SUBSTANTIAL FIGURE, COMMUNIST TRADING CORP'S ADVERTISING BUDGET FOR HK

IS SMALL - ABOUT 3 MILLION A YEAR, OF WHICH THREE UNCLASSIFIED

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FOURTHS GO FOR BUYING TIME ON HK'S TWO PRIVATE TV STATIONS, WITH BALANCE ON PRESS AND MAGAZINE ADS. CONTENT AND PRESENTATION IS REMARKABLY TRADITIONAL.

COMMUNIST ADVERTISING AGENCIES, HOWEVER, DELIBERATELY CULTIVATE AN ALMOST INVISIBLY LOW PROFILE. CHINA ADVERTISING CO., PEKING'S CHIEF AGENCY IN HK IS ALMOST PATHOLOGICALLY SHY.

4. HONG KONG

AFP HK (WP) NOTES DROP IN FLOW OF LEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM CHINA, 32,885 IN 1974 COMPARED TO 55,658 YEAR BEFORE (WP).

JOC'S STRAUSS IN HK DETAILS DROP IN REVENUES FOR CONTAINER SHIPPING LINES, AS TONNAGE BETWEEN HK AND WEST COAST DECLINED 23.7 PERCENT FOR FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1974; SHIPMENTS TO EAST COAST SAID TO BE DOWN EVEN MORE.

5. JAPAN

UPI TOKYO (S-N) CITES PRESS REPORTS, BASED ON GOJ SOURCE, THAT JAPAN AND PRC WILL RESUME NEGOTIATIONS SOON ON TREATY OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP; PRELIMINARY TALKS HELD IN TOKYO LAST FALL BY VICE FM HAN NIEN-LUNG AND THEN-FM KIMURA. MOST NEGOTIATING EXPECTED TO BE DONE IN PEKING, BY HAN AND AMB OGAWA, AND JAPAN HOPES TO CONCLUDE TREATY THIS FALL.

JOC SAYS NEW PLASTIC DEVELOPED BY MITSUBISHI PETROCHEMICAL IS FIRE-RETARDANT, PRODUCES NO TOXIC GASES, RESISTS ELECTRICAL ARCING. VERSION FOR USE IN HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES MEETS UL SAFETY STANDARDS; ANOTHER VERSION INTENDED FOR USE IN AUTO INTERIORS AND ACCESSORIES.

UNITED CHURCH OF JAPAN (KYODAN) "ADMITS IT ERRED" IN HELPING SPONSOR CHRISTIAN PAVILLION AT EXPO 70; OPPONENTS WITHIN KYODAN CHARGED EXPO 70 WAS LINKED TO UNCLASSIFIED

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REMILITARIZATION AND ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION (WP).

WSJ'S MARTIN IN SAN ANGELO DESCRIBES HOW MITSUBISHI AVIATION CAME TO WEST TEXAS TO BUILD MU 2 TURBOPROP

FOR SALE IN COMPETITIVE US AVIATION MARKET, GAINED 27 PERCENT OF ESTIMATED 129 MILLION DOL TURBOPROP MARKET LAST YEAR ON SALES OF 72 AIRCRAFT.

6. AUSTRALIA

NEWPORT, R.I., PROPOSES TO SET UP RELIEF STATION TO COLLECT CLOTHING, FOOD, MONEY, FOR RELIEF OF DARWIN, OUT OF GREAT AFFECTION FOR AUSTRALIANS WHO CAME TO CHALLENGE FOR AMERICAN CUP (CSM).

JOC'S STOVE IN SYDNEY REVIEWS DISASTROUS IMPACT OF STORM-DAMAGE PAYOUTS ON AUSTRALIAN INSURANCE COMPANIES, CAPPED BY CYCLONE WHICH DEVASTATED DARWIN.

7. PHILIPPINES

UPI MANILA (PHINQ) QUOTES GOP RELEASE THAT RC PRIESTS DE LA TORRE AND LAHOZ, RECENTLY ARRESTED BY MILITARY, WERE PART OF "ELABORATE COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK OPERATED CLANDESTINELY BY COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE PHILIPPINES". BUT FIRST PHIL PRESS NOTICE OF CASE IGNORES THEIR HUNGER STRIKE IN PROTEST AGAINST TORTURE OF MARTIAL LAW DETAINEES. WP SAYS GOP ORDERED INVESTIGATION OF TORTURE CHARGE.

INTL CHESS BODY FIDE ANNOUNCES IN AMSTERDAM THAT PHILIPPINES OFFERED 5 MILLION DOL PRIZE FOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CHESS MATCH IN MANILA BETWEEN BOBBY FISCHER AND SOVIET CHALLENGER KARPOV (NYT, CHITRIB, CSM).

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

8. CHINA

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WP'S JUDITH MARTIN SAYS NGA'S SHOW OF PRC ARCHEOLOGICAL FINDS IS PROVING AS POPULAR AS THE 1972 SOVIET ART SHOW. MORE THAN 108,000 SAW THE CHINESE SHOW IN FIRST TWO WEEKS. SOVIET SHOW ATTRACTED 316,000 IN ITS MONTH HERE. THERE HAVE NOT BEEN THREE-HOUR LINES FOR THE CHINESE EXHIBIT, AS THERE WERE FOR THE SOVIET, WHICH OCCUPIED SO MUCH LESS SPACE IN NGA.

GLOBE AND MAIL'S JOHN BURNS IN PEKING (CSM) WRITES FEATURE ON ANTIQUE HUNTING IN LIU LI CH'ANG - A POPULAR WEEKEND PASTIME FOR FOREIGN DIPLOMATS AND JOURNALISTS IN PRC CAPITAL, DESPITE HEAVY PRICE RISES.

JOC'S STRAUSS IN HK DISCUSSES PRC'S NEW YEAR EDITORIAL. NOTES MODERATE TONE USED BY LEADERSHIP URGING NATION TO SEEK PRODUCTION GROWTH IN FINAL YEAR OF CURRENT FIVE-YEAR PLAN. EDITORIAL ALSO PRAISED MOVEMENT AGAINST INFLUENCES OF LIN PIAO AND CONFUCIUS, BUT THE LINE WAS NOT STRESSED. THERE WERE NO REFERENCES TO "GOING AGAINST THE TIDE," TO "CORRECT ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION" OR TO "STRUGGLE" - ALL OF WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN GESTURES OF COMPROMISE TOWARDS CCP LEFT WING.

SAYS EDITORIAL MAY HAVE BEEN MORE IMPORTANT FOR WHAT IT FAILED TO CONTAIN THAN FOR USUAL EXHORTATIONS. IT WAS SHORT AND, IN DEPARTURE FROM PAST PROCEDURE, FAILED TO SPELL OUT CHINA'S ECON SITUATION IN 1974.

MANY OBSERVERS HOLD THAT ABSENCE OF DETAILS ON QUOTAS INDICATES NONFULFILLMENT. HOWEVER, THERE IS NOW A VIEW THAT STATISTICS WERE NOT GATHERED QUICKLY ENOUGH AND THAT INFO WILL BE RELEASED IN NEAR FUTURE. THIRD OPINION HOLDS THAT THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP IS HOLDING DETAILS ABOUT ECON GROWTH FOR THE NPC. PERHAPS SIGNIFICANTLY, HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO MENTION OF NPC THIS YEAR AS THERE WAS LAST YEAR, AND TONE OF EDITORIAL WAS MORE SUBDUED.

POLITICALLY PERHAPS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OMISSION WAS LAST YEAR'S PRAISE FOR PLA. CITES PROVINCIAL
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BROADCASTS AS INDICATING THAT PLA IS HAVING ITS POLITICAL POWERS REDUCED.

9. JAPAN

SUN'S SEIDEN IN TOKYO DISCUSSES NEW 500-PAGE GOVT REPORT ON JAPAN'S YOUTH. REPORT REFLECTS GROWING CONCERN OVER TREMENDOUS PRESSURE ON SCHOOL CHILDREN TO CRAM FOR EXAMS, TO GET INTO BETTER SCHOOLS AND ULTIMATELY TO GET GOOD JOBS. REPORT SAID THE ACADEMIC RAT RACE BEGINS IN NURSERY SCHOOL; ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN, ON THE AVERAGE, STUDY TWICE AS MANY HOURS A DAY AS COLLEGE STUDENTS. AS A RESULT, THEY HAVE LITTLE TIME LEFT TO RELAX OR LEARN HOW TO GET ALONG WITH OTHER CHILDREN. JUVENILE SUICIDE AND CRIME HAVE INCREASED, AND AVERAGE AGE OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS HAS DECREASED.

CITES OFFICIAL IN PRIMIN'S OFFICE WHERE REPORT PREPARED THAT "EVERYONE IN JAPAN IS FAMILIAR WITH THIS PROBLEM, BUT IT IS HARD TO CHANGE SINCE THE

ONES WHO COULD CHANGE IT ARE PEOPLE WHO HAVE ALREADY GONE THROUGH THE SUFFERING AND ARE NOW ENJOYING THE REWARDS OF THE SYSTEM."

10. INDOCHINA

TAD SZULC (WP) NOTES THAT SVN IS SCENE OF HEAVIEST FIGHTING SINCE C-F, BUT HE DOES NOT EXPECT A FULL-BLOWN TET-TYPE OFFENSIVE IN NEW YEAR; INSTEAD, SEES NVN APPLYING MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE AND LESS COSTLY PROCESS OF "ACCELERATED EROSION." ACCORDING WESTERN INTELLIGENCE SPECIALISTS, THIS AIMS AT STEADY WEAKENING OF GVN AND ITS CONTROL OVER COUNTRYSIDE, ESPECIALLY NW OF SAIGON AND IN DELTA. GVN LOSS OF CONTROL OVER DELTA IS AN ACUTE EMBARRASSMENT TO THIEU REGIME AS WELL AS A SERIOUS MIL AND ECON PROBLEM. BY DRAWING SOME OF SAIGON'S BEST TROOPS INTO DELTA BATTLE AND THE "IRON TRIANGLE", HANOI IS WEAKENING SVN POSITIONS ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY, THUS RAISING NEW DANGERS IN OTHER PARTS OF VN WHERE HANOI CAN SCORE IMPORTANT UNCLASSIFIED

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SUCCESSSES WITH LIMITED FORCES.

HANOI'S EXPECTATION APPEARS TO BE THAT PERHAPS WITHIN A YEAR SAIGON WILL BE SUFFICIENTLY DEBILITATED TO ACCEPT POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION AS ENVISIONED IN PARIS ACCORDS. SUCH ACCOMMODATION MAY FIRST RESULT IN BELATED CREATION OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF UNITY AND CONCORD BY SAIGON AND PRG. IT IS GENERALLY ACCEPTED BY ANALYSTS THAT IF COMMUNISTS SUCCEED IN FORCING ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNCIL THROUGH MIL THEY WOULD BE DEALING FROM MUCH GREATER POSITION OF POLITICAL STRENGTH THAN WOULD HAVE BEEN THE CASE TWO YEARS AGO. SOME EXPERTS, IN FACT, SUGGEST THAT EMERGENCE OF COUNCIL OR SIMILAR BODY

IN 1975 MAY HAVE TO BE PRECEDED BY THIEU'S DEPARTURE,
SOMETHING US DESPERATELY SOUGHT TO AVOID DURING PEACE
NEGOTIATIONS.

IF SUCH A SCENARIO DEVELOPS, HANOI WILL HAVE ACCOMPLISHED
ITS MAJOR POLITICAL OBJECTIVE. THIS WOULD POSE AWESOME
DILEMMA FOR PRES FORD IN DECIDING WHETHER US HAS
CAPABILITY OF PREVENTING SVN COLLAPSE, WHICH WOULD
MAKE DECADE OF AMERICAN WAR THERE A WHOLLY WASTED
EFFORT. CONGRESS IS OBVIOUSLY UNLIKELY TO AUTHORIZE
ANY NEW DIRECT US INVOLVEMENT, AND MAY EVEN RESIST,
AS IN 1974, AN INCREASE IN MIL AND ECON ASSISTANCE TO
PROP UP THIEU A WHILE LONGER.

PRES FORD COULD THEN FIND HIMSELF IN POSITION OF HAVING
TO ACQUIESCE TACITLY TO DE FACTO COMMUNIST TAKEOVER
IN ABSENCE OF OTHER ALTERNATIVES. IF THIS IS TO BE
THE CASE, ONE MIGHT WELL ASK WHY HAK CONSTRUCTED AN
AGREEMENT THAT PREDICTABLY SET THE STAGE FOR CONTINUED
WARFARE. IN RETROSPECT, HE COULD HAVE FORCED CREATION
OF THE COUNCIL LINKED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
PEACE ACCORD AT A TIME WHEN SAIGON WAS IN A MUCH BETTER
MIL AND POLITICAL POSITION FOLLOWING CHRISTMAS BOMBINGS
OF NVN. "SO MUCH FOR THE BLENDING OF SLOPPY DIPLOMACY
WITH TERROR BOMBINGS INTENDED TO GIVE THIEU AN ILLUSORY
'DECENT INTERVAL.'" KISSINGER

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